

WICHITA FALLS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Technical Advisory Committee
Minutes

Wednesday, July 13, 2005

Voting Members Present:

Dave Clark – City of Wichita Falls, Dir. of Community Development
James Kelley – TxDOT, Area Engineer
Jeff Hogan – City of Wichita Falls, City Engineer
Karen Montgomery-Gagné – City of Wichita Falls, Community Development Planner III
Mark Beauchamp – City of Wichita Falls, Traffic Superintendent
Tim Hertel – TxDOT, Director of Operations
Danny Brown – TxDOT, Director of Trans. Planning and Development
Joe Anderson – TxDOT, Director of Construction

MPO Staff:

Donnie Arbeau - City of Wichita Falls MPO, Transportation Planner I
Lin Barnett – City of Wichita Falls MPO, Transportation Planner III

Highway Needs Committee Members:

Bettye Tanner-Shelby

Visitors:

Absent:

Darron Leiker – City of Wichita Falls – Interim City Manager, Interim MPO Director

I. Welcome & Introduction

Mr. Barnett called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. and welcomed everyone present.

II. Approval of the April 6th TAC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Barnett asked for comments on the minutes. There were none. Mr. Hogan motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Review and Comment Regarding TPC's April 20th and June 6th Meeting Minutes - *No Action Required*

No comments were received.

IV. Review, Discussion and Recommendation to Forward the 2006 Unified Planning Work Program to TPC for Approval

Mr. Barnett discussed the changes made to the document since it was last presented to TAC and TPC at the April, 2005 meetings. He outlined the changes requested by TxDOT, Austin (TPP and PTN) involving Title VI, Civil Rights elements under Task 1 – Administration/Management and Task 2 – Data Development and Maintenance. The changes in Task 1 would include addressing the public involvement policy and other Title VI issues that the MPO examines on an annual basis. Task 2 would include a subtask indicating the data on minority and low-income populations would be analyzed annually with respect to Title VI requirements. Task 3 would include a subtask (3.6) for the provision of planning assistance for the multi-county regional planning project, scheduled for 2005, to develop transit service areas and plans in response to HB 3588.

Mr. Barnett discussed the budget summary for the FY 2006 UPWP stating the budget would be down, from last year, by nearly \$50,000 because of the amount of funds spent on the 2005-2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update during 2004/2005. Total Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) for FY 2006 would be \$173,097 compared to \$222,215 for FY 2005 for a difference of \$49,118. Carryover funds from 2005 into 2006 would not be as great as they were from 2004 into 2005.

Mr. Clark commented the newsletter should be included in the Falls Focus newsletter in order to reach over 31,000 families living within the MPO area. Mr. Barnett stated it would cost the MPO nearly \$8,000 to include a four-page newsletter in Falls Focus as opposed to the \$800 spent to send the old newsletter to a mailing list of 425 persons and businesses. He stated in order to do something like this it would require TPC approval because of the \$5,000 limitation on spending for any one item. Mr. Arbeau elaborated on what type of information would go into the proposed MPO newsletter stating that a prototype was currently being circulated to MPO staff for comments and suggestions.

Mr. Brown suggested that a subtask be added to the UPWP stating that the TAC would develop a process for prioritizing short-range, long-range and bicycle/pedestrian transportation related projects. The TAC would then present its findings to TPC for review and comment. Once approved by TPC, recommendations could be made to TxDOT and City Council concerning highest priority projects within the MPO boundary. Everyone agreed that a subtask should be added to Task 4, Metropolitan Transportation Plan, stating that a prioritized list should be developed to rank the importance of City and TxDOT projects.

Mr. Brown suggested adding a travel budget to Task 1 – Administration/Management. Mr. Barnett stated that he lists all travel destinations and expenses each year in the Annual Performance and Expenditure Report. He commented that he looks at what is spent the previous year on travel and adjusts accordingly for the next year of anticipated travel expenditures. Mr. Brown stated that a travel budget did not necessarily need to be added to the FY 2006 UPWP, but that it would probably be best if one was developed

for future UPWP's. Mr. Barnett stated he would work with TxDOT to develop one for next year.

Mr. Brown discussed subtask 5.3 concerning the preliminary in-house study of a possible reliever route from Seymour Highway and Loop 11, down North Beverly Drive, across Avenue H that would tie back into Kemp Street. He questioned whether it would be a MPO study or a City of Wichita Falls study. Mr. Clark stated the MPO has the resources for such a study and that it would benefit the area, regionally, because if this route were developed it would connect to a state highway and become a minor or major arterial. Mr. Brown pointed out that the budget reflected the MPO would spend \$2,500 as opposed to the City spending \$500 dollars for the study. Mr. Brown asked if this would include a consultant to help with the study. Mr. Barnett stated part of the reason for doing the in-house study was to determine if a consultant should be brought in to examine further the possibility of developing this route.

Mr. Brown discussed the need to include an attendance list in future TPC meeting packets so that TPC board members would be aware of their own meeting attendance. He referred back to Article II, Section II-2 of the MPO By-Laws stating "In the event that a member misses three consecutive meetings, the TPC shall ask the respective governmental entity or agency to remove the member and to select a new member to replace them." The board agreed that an attendance record should be added to the TPC meeting packets.

Mr. Clark motioned to endorse the FY 2006 UPWP to TPC as amended during the meeting. Mr. Hertel seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

V. Preliminary Report on June Environmental Justice Short-Range Transportation Project Public Meetings

Mr. Barnett briefly outlined the results obtained from the June, 2005 public meetings on Short-Range Transportation Projects and the Wichita Falls Transit System. He commented that attendance at all three meetings was good and that total attendance was 108. Mr. Barnett stated there were several project nomination/comment sheets returned with new project nominations, as well as comments on the projects presented at the meetings. He stated that he planned to have the final report done in time for the October TAC and TPC meetings.

Mr. Brown discussed how the final report should be written and presented so that anyone reading it could easily understand the results of the three meetings. Mr. Barnett stated he would use the guidelines from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidebook, *Environmental Justice: What You Should Know*, FHWA, Washington Division Office, (June, 2003), and other sources of Environmental Justice information to write a report that would satisfy FHWA/TxDOT requirements and that would clearly explain all of the issues discussed at all three public meetings. The report would focus on all positive and negative comments received on every project discussed or nominated at the meetings. Mr. Brown stated the public meetings were well organized

and the information gained from them should prove to be invaluable. He advocated that MPO staff use the information to produce a useful tool for project prioritization and to continue promoting this type of public input in the future.

Mr. Hogan asked if the preliminary report reflected each individual comment received on each individual project discussed at the meetings. Mr. Barnett stated each individual project nomination sheet was listed on the report as underlined text and the comments listed below each project nomination as bullets. Mr. Brown suggested, for the final report, to list all comments negative, positive and unedited, from the project nomination forms and the tape recordings of the meetings under each project title in the report. This would assimilate all the data for a specific project into one area of the report. Mr. Hogan agreed stating he wanted the report to accurately reflect all the feedback received at the meetings.

Mr. Hogan also suggested that at next year's meetings the transit portion should be put into its own separate meeting away from roadway discussions in order to focus more directly on transit issues and provide equal time.

VI. Other Business:

a. Discussion & Overview of Progress on Local Transportation Projects – City and TxDOT staff (Quarterly Review)

City Report: Mr. Hogan stated the 2005 street rehabilitation project would involve Midwestern Parkway between Kemp and Old Jacksboro Highway as a recycle, replacement and overlay in two to three weeks; Windthorst Road would be advertised for a reconstruction project along US 287; Phase II and III of the Faith Village project that involves Kemp Street would not be done before the end of 2005. He stated the project may be awarded before the end of 2005, but actual work would probably not take place until early next year.

TxDOT Report: Mr. Kelley stated the MSU project (Sikes Lake Phase II) was in its final stages and that the books would soon close out on it; the Maureen Street and Jacksboro Highway landscape beautification projects were completed other than the warranty time on the trees and some final paper work. He stated the Novachip overlay on SH 240 and on LP 473 should begin in the next couple of weeks; the Cypress Street Bridge had been torn down but hopefully the road would open in time for the new school year.

b. MPO Quarterly Financial Report (2nd Quarter – January, February, March)

Mr. Barnett reported MPO expenditures for the second quarter were slightly behind projections, but that once invoicing began on the Kimley-Horn Traffic Signal Optimization study things would begin to level out again. He stated that expenditures were at 36.22% half-way through the fiscal year.

c. Progress Report on the Traffic Signal Optimization Study of the Kemp Boulevard and Southwest Parkway Traffic Corridors

Mr. Beauchamp explained that Kimley-Horn was currently in the process of developing the models and that traffic cycle lengths were fairly similar to existing cycle lengths. He discussed Southwest Parkway and the recommendations that were made by Kimley-Horn. Mr. Beauchamp commented that even though there were similarities with the Traffic Department's cycle lengths, the consultant had the ability to find nuances in the traffic patterns that could be used to enhance the traffic flow. He stated the next step would be to analyze the intersections in the study corridors for possible upgrading to pedestrian crossings. Mr. Beauchamp stated there was not enough money in the City budget, at this time, for pedestrian crossing signals or "Ped-Heads" at each intersection along Southwest Parkway and that the next option involved using cross-with-green-light hardware such as push buttons. Due to the limited amount of pedestrian traffic at these intersections, this option will allow sufficient green time for people to safely cross the intersection. It will throw the intersection out of synchronization for a few cycles, but should come back into cycle quickly. Mr. Beauchamp did state that Ped-Heads would be installed at Taft and FM 369 due to several requests from the public. Mr. Hertel asked if TxDOT contributed funds to install Ped-Heads at the other intersections would the City consider doing this. Mr. Beauchamp replied that the City would accept this offer. Mr. Hertel commented he would examine his budget further before committing 100%, but that he felt confident something could be worked out. Mr. Beauchamp stated signs would be posted at McNiel and Southwest Parkway to prohibit pedestrian crossing due to the lack of a collection point on the north side of the street and the drainage ditch located there.

d. Other

Mr. Brown reminded staff to include the letter of cost savings from Kimley-Horn Associates on the Traffic Signal Optimization Study contract in the July 27th TPC meeting packets.

Mr. Hogan reminded everyone that the Johnson Road project was still under construction until at least August 15th and the pipeline project should be done by late September.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Lin Barnett
MPO Director, TAC Chairperson